

EXHIBIT P

1 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

2 DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

4 _____)
5 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)
et al.,)
6)
Plaintiffs,) Civil Action
7)
vs.) No. 1:21-cv-11558-LTS
8)
AMERICAN AIRLINES GROUP)
9 INC. and JETBLUE AIRWAYS)
CORPORATION,)
10)
Defendants.)
11 _____)

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14
15 DEPOSITION OF NATHAN H. MILLER, Ph.D.

16 Washington, DC

17 August 17, 2022

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23
24 Reported by: John L. Harmonson, RPR

25 Job No. 213777

1 N. MILLER

2 -----

3 AFTERNOON SESSION

4 1:18 p.m.

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6 THE VIDEOGRAPHER: We are back on the 13:19
7 record at 1:18. 13:19

8 BY MR. WALL: 13:19

9 Q. All right. Let's pick up with sort of 13:19
10 the basic question of why you're simulating that 13:19
11 the NEA is like a merger. So let me begin and 13:19
12 let's see if we can agree on a few things. 13:19

13 So you agree that technically, 13:19
14 formalistically, the NEA is not a merger; right? 13:19

15 A. That's right. It's an agreement 13:19
16 between JetBlue and American. 13:19

17 Q. It's a bilateral contract or set of 13:19
18 contracts. 13:19

19 A. Okay. 13:19

20 Q. So American doesn't have any right to 13:19
21 choose board members for JetBlue or vice versa; 13:19
22 right? 13:20

23 A. Okay. 13:20

24 Q. I mean, is that consistent with your 13:20
25 understanding? 13:20

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2 A. Yes, it is. 13:20

3 Q. Okay. The NEA is not going to lead to 13:20
4 the elimination of the JetBlue brand; correct? 13:20

5 A. I haven't seen any evidence that it 13:20
6 would. 13:20

7 Q. Okay. Nor the American brand; right? 13:20

8 A. Same for American. 13:20

9 Q. Okay. And you haven't seen any 13:20
10 evidence that the NEA requires JetBlue to adopt 13:20
11 or conform to American's so-called legacy or 13:20
12 general network carrier business model, have you? 13:20

13 A. No, I don't think there is language 13:20
14 that requires JetBlue to do that. 13:20

15 Q. There is no permanent transfer of 13:20
16 assets through the NEA, is there? 13:20

17 A. No. 13:20

18 Q. And there is no pricing coordination 13:20
19 in the NEA, is there? 13:20

20 A. I do not believe the NEA provides a 13:20
21 structure for JetBlue and American to talk about 13:21
22 the prices that they're setting. 13:21

23 Q. There is no aggregate capacity 13:21
24 coordination of the kind that Dr. Town talks 13:21
25 about in his report in connection with capacity 13:21

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2 discipline, is there? 13:21

3 A. The NEA is a bilateral contract 13:21
4 between American and JetBlue, and I believe 13:21
5 Professor Town when he talks about capacity 13:21
6 coordination, what you're referring to is 13:21
7 something more industry-wide, and the contract is 13:21
8 going to cover coordination of capacity between 13:21
9 JetBlue and American specifically. 13:21

10 Q. But it doesn't -- they do not discuss 13:21
11 or coordinate the setting of their industry-wide 13:21
12 capacity; the size of their fleets, for example, 13:21
13 those sorts of things? 13:22

14 A. Certainly I think that the results 13:22
15 would have bearing on that. But I believe what 13:22
16 the agreement allows for is coordination on 13:22
17 capacity in routes that connect to an NEA 13:22
18 airport. 13:22

19 Q. Okay. So then go ahead and -- in 13:22
20 light of all of that, go ahead and just explain 13:22
21 for the record why it is that you believe that 13:22
22 the competitive effects of the NEA can be fairly 13:22
23 addressed through a merger simulation. 13:22

24 A. Sure. First of all, for 13:22
25 clarification, the model that I'm using 13:22

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2 characterizes the incentives that are created by 13:23
3 the NEA specifically, not those of a generic 13:23
4 merger. So I prefer to call it just the 13:23
5 simulation model. 13:23

6 The model incorporates that when the 13:23
7 NEA is in place and in effect on particular 13:23
8 routes, that JetBlue benefits if American's 13:23
9 revenue increase, and American benefits if 13:23
10 JetBlue revenue increase. And that creates 13:23
11 incentives, according to economic theory, to 13:23
12 raise price in a way that's mutually beneficial 13:23
13 for JetBlue and American along the particular 13:23
14 markets that I've studied. And that's laid out 13:23
15 in Section 4 of the report. 13:24

16 Of course the NEA is more broad than 13:24
17 only the sharing of revenue. It also creates an 13:24
18 avenue for capacity coordination. And I've 13:24
19 considered the arguments that were put forth by 13:24
20 the defendants' economist in the course of the 13:24
21 investigation, and also put forth by Dr. Israel 13:24
22 in his expert report that the NEA would provide 13:24
23 unilateral incentives for each party to expand 13:24
24 output. 13:24

25 And I've pointed out both in my report 13:24

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2 and in my initial report, reply report, that it 13:24
3 would be inappropriate to consider those 13:25
4 unilateral incentives in a context in which 13:25
5 JetBlue and American are coordinating. 13:25

6 In fact, if they were to act on the 13:25
7 unilateral incentives of the MGIA to expand 13:25
8 capacity instead of coordinating capacity with 13:25
9 each other, the effect would be that each party 13:25
10 would subsidize unprofitable expansion of the 13:25
11 other and thereby exploit the other partner. 13:25
12 Joint profits would go down. 13:25

13 And therefore, it does not seem 13:25
14 reasonable or likely that decisions taken in the 13:25
15 midst of capacity coordination would undermine or 13:25
16 alter the effects of revenue sharing on pricing 13:25
17 incentives that the agreement creates. 13:26

18 And that is the way that my model 13:26
19 captures the incentives that are created by the 13:26
20 NEA. 13:26

21 Q. Okay. Thank you. 13:26

22 So in Section 4.1 of your initial 13:26
23 report, around page 21, you lay out your argument 13:26
24 that incentive alignment, not a change in 13:26
25 coordination or control, is what makes a 13:26

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2 that are most meaningful, I believe. 14:03

3 Q. In the case of nonstop overlap routes 14:03
4 that touch the NEA airports, how, if at all, does 14:03
5 your simulation differ from a generic merger 14:03
6 simulation? 14:03

7 A. Those routes also can feature connect 14:03
8 traffic from American or JetBlue, or possibly 14:03
9 both. And in those settings, the effects of the 14:03
10 competing nonstop, the prices that are put on the 14:03
11 competing nonstop route -- or on the connect 14:03
12 route are only partially internalized, which is 14:03
13 consistent with the terms of the NEA. 14:04

14 Q. Okay. So if I understand it, what 14:04
15 you're saying is, say for example, San Francisco 14:04
16 to New York, that some amount of the passengers 14:04
17 are going to go New York, Chicago, to San 14:04
18 Francisco. In a generic merger simulation, that 14:04
19 would be fully internalized. But in this 14:04
20 simulation, that particular feature of the 14:04
21 connect traffic that competes with the nonstop 14:04
22 traffic is subject to partial internalization? 14:04

23 A. That's correct. 14:04

24 Q. Okay. Anything else besides that? 14:04

25 A. As I said, aside from the, you know, 14:04

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2 trying to constrain it only to NEA markets, I 14:04
3 think those are the big two that came to mind. 14:04
4 But I'll refer you to the report because there 14:04
5 might be nuances that come up, you know, looking 14:04
6 at different markets. 14:05

7 Q. Okay. So focusing back on the 14:05
8 importance of revenue sharing, is it appropriate 14:05
9 to analyze the effects of the NEA on routes in 14:05
10 which the parties do not share revenues as a 14:05
11 merger? Let me say that again. I kind of 14:05
12 botched it. 14:05

13 Is it appropriate to predict the 14:05
14 competitor effects of the NEA on nonstop overlap 14:05
15 routes on which the parties do not share revenue? 14:05

16 MR. DeRITA: Objection to form. 14:05

17 THE WITNESS: It can be appropriate. 14:06
18 And I believe that I've done so in my report in 14:06
19 the sense that I've tried to get a sense for how 14:06
20 outcomes might change in other markets if the 14:06
21 competitive effects of the NEA extend beyond what 14:06
22 is explicitly covered in the NEA agreement. 14:06

23 BY MR. WALL:
24 Q. I'm sorry. I'm not talking about -- 14:06
25 my question was limited to the nonstop overlap 14:06

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2 routes. There's a number of carve-out routes in 14:06
3 which there's no revenue sharing; right? 14:06

4 A. I thought you were talking about, for 14:06
5 example, maybe Miami to LA. 14:06

6 Q. No, that's not what I'm talking about. 14:06
7 I'm talking like, for example, Boston to 14:06
8 Charlotte, Boston to Philadelphia, Boston to 14:06
9 Phoenix. 14:06

10 A. Okay. With that in mind, could you 14:06
11 ask the question? I'll try to get through it. 14:06

12 Q. Yeah. 14:06

13 Can you explain to me how you can 14:06
14 justify predicting the competitive effects of the 14:06
15 NEA as if it were a merger with respect to those 14:07
16 nonstop overlap routes that are carved out of 14:07
17 revenue sharing? 14:07

18 A. I am -- I have doubts as to the 14:07
19 effectiveness of the proposed carve-outs. And as 14:07
20 a result of those doubts, I elected to provide 14:07
21 results summarizing the likely competitive 14:07
22 effects both including and excluding the six 14:07
23 carve-out routes. 14:07

24 Q. What is the basis of your doubts about 14:07
25 the effectiveness of revenue sharing? 14:07

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2 A. First, my understanding is that 14:07
3 American and JetBlue can modify the NEA as they 14:08
4 wish, and so a carve-out that exists now may not 14:08
5 exist in the future. 14:08

6 Second, the NEA capacity coordination 14:08
7 that I think matters quite a deal here, it may be 14:08
8 hard to separate out flight decisions along one 14:08
9 particular route from flight decisions at 14:08
10 airports like New York or like Boston where the 14:08
11 route connects. And in that sense, it could well 14:08
12 be that the carve-out routes are intertwined with 14:08
13 NEA decisions even though they are carved out. 14:08

14 Furthermore, there is some prospect 14:09
15 that the NEA creates a willingness of American 14:09
16 and JetBlue to soften price competition between 14:09
17 them in these markets where there is not a lot of 14:09
18 other competitors in a way that would harm 14:09
19 consumers. 14:09

20 And putting those together, I 14:09
21 determined that it would be appropriate to report 14:09
22 results that both include and exclude the 14:09
23 carve-out routes. 14:09

24 Q. Do you have an opinion, however, as to 14:09
25 whether the harms that you quantify with respect 14:09

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2 to the carve-out routes are likely to 14:09
3 materialize? 14:09

4 A. I have concerns about the 14:09
5 effectiveness of the carve-outs in the contracts 14:09
6 in ameliorating harm. And I'll note that if 14:10
7 there is a way for the parties to soften price 14:10
8 competition along those routes it would be 14:10
9 profitable to do so. 14:10

10 And so I do view it as reasonably 14:10
11 likely that harm would occur along those routes. 14:10

12 Q. Okay. I know you're sort of new to 14:10
13 this game. But, sir, do you understand that in 14:10
14 litigation an expert is allowed only to testify 14:10
15 to opinions that he or she has reached as a 14:10
16 result of some analysis consistent with their 14:10
17 expertise? 14:10

18 MR. DeRITA: Objection to form. 14:10

19 THE WITNESS: Yes. 14:10

20 BY MR. WALL: 14:10

21 Q. Okay. And have you or have you not 14:10
22 reached an opinion as to whether the harms on the 14:10
23 carve-out routes are what you quantify them to 14:10
24 be? 14:10

25 A. I think that there is likely to be 14:10

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2 substantial harm on the carve-out routes due to 14:11
3 concerns that I have about the carve-outs. 14:11

4 Q. How likely? 14:11

5 A. Reasonably likely. 14:11

6 Q. You said that. That's why I followed 14:11
7 up. How likely is reasonably likely? 14:11

8 A. I haven't quantified a particular 14:11
9 percentage if that's what you're asking for. 14:11

10 Q. More or less likely than the harm on 14:11
11 the routes that are actually subject to revenue 14:11
12 sharing? 14:11

13 A. Oh, okay. I do observe that the 14:11
14 carve-outs are intended to fix competitive 14:11
15 problems. They may be successful at doing so. I 14:11
16 have doubts. And so, you know, if you had to 14:11
17 rank the likelihoods, I would say, you know, at 14:11
18 the top would be the ones that are not subject to 14:11
19 the carve-outs, and below that would be the ones 14:12
20 that are subject to the carve-outs. 14:12

21 Q. Do you have any basis for believing 14:12
22 that, notwithstanding the carve-outs, American 14:12
23 and JetBlue are sharing revenues on the carve-out 14:12
24 routes? 14:12

25 A. No, I do not believe that they share 14:12

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2 revenue on the carve-out routes. 14:12

3 Q. So right now, American has no stake in 14:12
4 JetBlue's revenues on those carve-out routes and 14:12
5 JetBlue has no stake in American's revenues on 14:12
6 those carve-out routes; correct? 14:12

7 A. There is no direct financial stake. 14:12

8 Q. So if they are thinking of adjusting 14:12
9 their pricing based upon the internalization of 14:12
10 diversion from one to the other, there is no 14:12
11 point to it right now because they don't 14:12
12 internalize the diversion, do they? 14:12

13 A. No. That's correct. There would not 14:13
14 be internalization about diversion so long as the 14:13
15 routes remain carved out. 14:13

16 Q. You are aware, aren't you, that MGIA 14:13
17 is structured similarly to the revenue-sharing 14:13
18 provisions in the Atlantic joint business? 14:13

19 A. I've read a representation that that's 14:13
20 the case but I have not studied the other 14:13
21 agreements. 14:13

22 Q. That was going to be my question to 14:13
23 you. Have you done anything to study the 14:13
24 incentive effects or behavioral effects of 14:13
25 revenue sharing in the Atlantic joint business or 14:13

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2 C E R T I F I C A T E

3

4 DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

5 I, JOHN L. HARMONSON, a Notary Public
6 within and for the District of Columbia, do
7 hereby certify that NATHAN H. MILLER, Ph.D., the
8 witness whose deposition is hereinbefore set
9 forth, was duly sworn by me and that such
10 deposition is a true record of the testimony
11 given by such witness.

12 That before completion of the
13 proceedings, review and signature of the
14 transcript was requested.

15 I further certify that I am not related
16 to any of the parties to this action by blood or
17 marriage; and that I am in no way interested in
18 the outcome of this matter.

19 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set
20 my hand this 22nd day of August, 2022.

21

22



23 _____
JOHN L. HARMONSON, RPR

24

My commission expires: 04/14/26

25